

Beam width assessment of a Linear Array for MaMIMO applications at 3.5 GHz using measurements and raytracing

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Abstract

The width of a beam produced by MaMIMO arrays will affect a user's exposure to RF-EMFs. We performed measurements in an anechoic chamber using a virtual arrays and successfully assessed this beamwidth. We validated our measurements with simulations.

1 Introduction

In the fifth generation of telecommunication networks, Massive Multiple-input-multiple-output (MaMIMO, [1]) base stations (BSs) will produce narrow RF-EMF beams aimed at each specific user device they service. Knowledge on the widths of these beams is essential to evaluate a user's exposure to RF-EMFs. The aim of this study is to assess this beam width via measurements in an anechoic chamber and to validate the used setup with free-space simulations.

2 Materials and Method

2.1 Measurement setup

Figure 1 shows a schematic top view of the measurement setup in the anechoic chamber. Two vertically polarized dipole dual cone broadband antennas, a transmitting (TX) and receiving (RX) antenna, are connected to a vector network analyzer (VNA) performing measurements at 3.5 GHz. The TX antenna is fixed on a linear positioning system, moving along the y-axis. The RX antenna is placed on a 2D positioning system, consisting of two orthogonally oriented linear positioners moving along the y- and x-axis. Positioning systems are co-planar, such that the antennas stay in the same xy-plane as they move.

The TX grid has 17x1 locations, with the interspacing chosen to be $\delta_{Tx}=4.28$ cm, which is about half the wavelength. This results in an array aperture L of 68 cm. The TX-RX distance D is chosen to be 68 cm as well. The RX grid has 33x17 locations (33 elements along the y-axis per 17 elements along the x-axis) with an interspacing half of the TX interspacing ($\delta_{Rx}=2.14$ cm). We measure the channel transfer function h_{kn} , measured between each Tx-position k ($k=1\dots 17$) and each Rx-position n ($n=1\dots 561$), resulting in the channel matrix $\mathbf{H}_{\text{measured}}$.

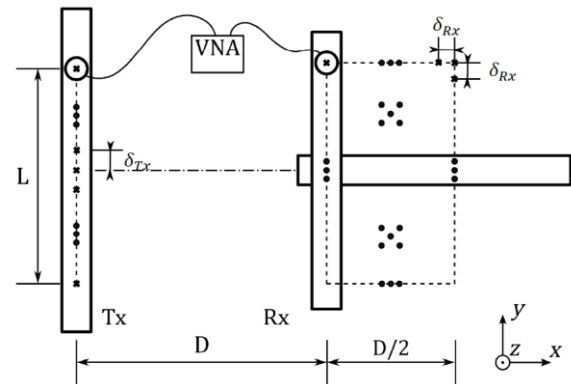


Figure 1: Schematic overview of the measurement setup.

To validate the measurement results, we estimate the wireless channel between the TX and RX virtual arrays using a Line-of-Sight (LOS) propagation model. This is suitable for calculating propagation in the anechoic chamber with virtual arrays, as it only takes into account direct propagation paths between TX-RX pairs and neglects mutual coupling effects of the arrays' antennas. This results in the simulated channel matrix $\mathbf{H}_{\text{model}}$.

2.2 Post processing

The channel correlation matrix (CM) is commonly used for the analysis of the performance of MaMIMO systems is defined as:

$$\mathbf{G} = \mathbf{H}^* \mathbf{H}. \quad (1)$$

This results in two 561x561 CMs: $\mathbf{G}_{\text{measured}}$ and $\mathbf{G}_{\text{model}}$ which are complex valued with real values on the main diagonal. To simplify the analysis we take the average of the results in each of the 17 Rx-rows along the x-axis. This way we calculate the average beam width over the distance $x=[68\text{cm } 102\text{cm}]$. This results in the 33x33 averaged CMs $\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,measured}}$ and $\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,model}}$. These are normalized.

To assess the beamwidth, we define the spatial correlation function (CF) $\rho(\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg},i})$ as the average over the i th diagonal of \mathbf{G}_{avg} :

$$\rho(\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg},i}) = \frac{\sum_{k=1}^{33-i} |g_{k,k+i}|}{33-i}, \quad (2)$$

with g_{kn} an element of \mathbf{G}_{avg} . ρ can be treated as a function of the distance in the y-direction between the receivers.

The average relative difference σ_{avg} between $\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,measured}}$ and $\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,model}}$ is calculated as:

$$\sigma_{\text{avg,lm}} = \frac{\left| \frac{|\mathbf{g}_{\text{avg,model,lm}}| - |\mathbf{g}_{\text{avg,measured,lm}}|}{|\mathbf{g}_{\text{avg,model,lm}}| + |\mathbf{g}_{\text{avg,measured,lm}}|} \right|}{2} \quad (3)$$

with $\sigma_{\text{avg,lm}}$ an element of σ_{avg} .

3 Results and Discussion

Figure 2 compares $\rho(\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,model}})$ and $\rho(\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,measured}})$. A very good agreement is observed. Both functions have maximum at $\delta y=0$ and decrease rapidly within a 1-wavelength distance (8.57 cm). After minor oscillations they flatten-out at around 4% of their maximum value for $\delta y > 0.5$ m ($\approx 6*\lambda$). The distance between the maximum and half the maximum $\delta_{\text{hmy}}=6.5$ cm, the beam width is thus $2*\delta_{\text{hmy}}=13$ cm.

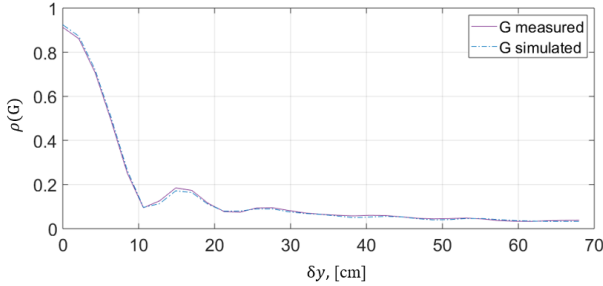


Figure 2: Spatial correlation function of $\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,measured}}$ and $\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,model}}$ in terms of the distance between their rows.

In Figure 3 the normalized CMs $\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,measured}}$ (3a), $\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,model}}$ (3b) and their difference σ_{avg} (3c) are shown. The main diagonal dominance is apparent in both averaged CMs. The same result has been obtained in measurement campaigns [2] and using geometry-based models [3]. σ_{avg} does not exceed 5% on the main diagonal. This implies a good agreement between measurements and simulations. However, some of the out-of-diagonal elements exceed 30%. The reason for that are the low absolute correlation values observed at large RX separation distances, which are shown in the top-right corner of the CMs. Even a small variation of the received signal (due to e.g. reflections by the positioners and support structures, alignment errors, radiation pattern variation) results in a relatively high simulation error. This measurement setup can now be used to evaluate exposure from MaMIMO systems in other environments, such as a room without absorbing materials, with obstructed line-of-sight conditions, etc.

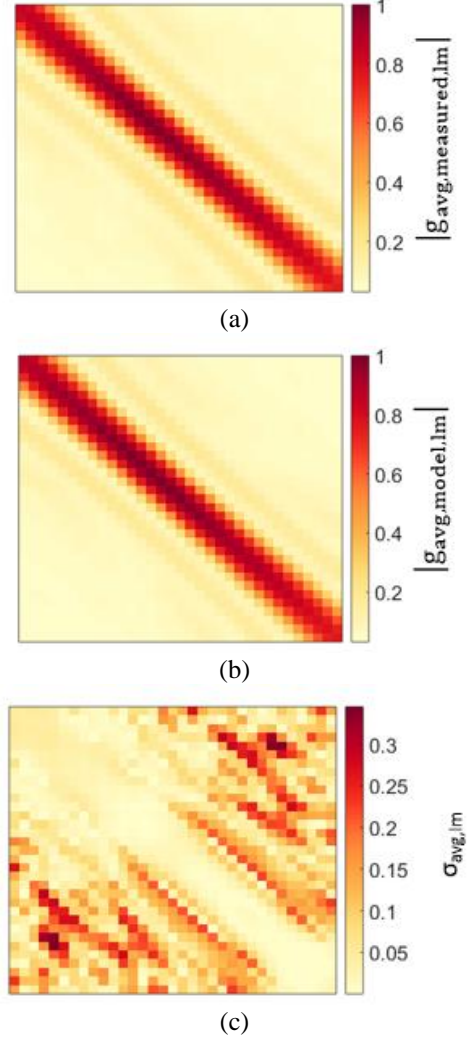


Figure 3: The normalized correlation matrices $\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,measured}}$ (a), $\mathbf{G}_{\text{avg,model}}$ (b), and their relative difference σ_{avg} (c).

4 Conclusions

We measured and simulated the beam width of a MaMIMO array and found $2*\delta_{\text{hmy}}=13$ cm. A good agreement between measurements and simulations was observed.

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6 References

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